



## INDICATOR: Alcohol and Drug Problems

**Threshold:** A raw score of 7 or above identifies interference with activities and responsibilities of daily living.

### Specific indicators:

If a patient scores below the mean for the Alcohol/Drug Problems domain, in-depth assessment is indicated to rule out substance abuse problems. If the problem is a substance other than alcohol, automatically consider this a high-risk problem. If the problem is alcohol related, further assessment can be easily accomplished by using the *CAGE* screening tool. Simply ask the following questions:

1. *Cut Back*

Have you felt the need to cut back on your alcohol use?

2. *Annoyed*

Have you ever been annoyed by questions about your alcohol use?

3. *Guilt*

Have you ever felt guilty about your drinking?

4. *Eye Opener*

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the a.m.?

- If the answer is “yes” on more than one of these questions, there is a high likelihood of a problem.
- Other exploratory questions concern the amount and frequency of use, mood changes after drinking, and family/work/legal problems due to drinking/drug use.

### • DSM-IV TR Criteria:

#### I. Abuse

A. A maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by one (or more) of the following occurring within a 12-month period:

1. recurrent substance use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home (e.g., repeated absences or poor work performance related to substance use; substance-related absences, suspensions, or expulsions from school; neglect of children or household)
2. recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous (e.g., driving an automobile or operating a machine when impaired by substance use)
3. recurrent substance-related legal problems (e.g., arrests for substance-related disorderly conduct)
4. continued substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance (e.g., arguments with spouse about consequences of intoxication, physical fights)

B. The symptoms have never met the criteria for substance dependence for this class of substance.

## II. Dependence

A maladaptive pattern of substance use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by three (or more) of the following, occurring at any time in the same 12-month period:

1. tolerance, as defined by either of the following:
  - a) a need for markedly increased amounts of the substance to achieve intoxication or the desired effect
  - b) markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance
2. withdrawal, as manifested by either of the following:
  - a) the characteristic withdrawal syndrome for the substance (refer to Criteria A and B of the criteria sets for withdrawal from the specific substances)
  - b) the same (or a closely related) substance is taken to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms
3. the substance is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended
4. there is a persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control substance use
5. a great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain the substance (e.g., visiting multiple doctors or driving long distances), use the substance (e.g., chain-smoking), or recover from its effects
6. important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of substance use

7. the substance use is continued despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by the substance (e.g., current cocaine use despite recognition of cocaine-induced depression, or continued drinking despite recognition that an ulcer was made worse by alcohol consumption)

### Does the patient:

- smell of alcohol?
- have visible hand tremors?
- appear unkempt/disheveled?
- have visible spider veins?
- make excuses?
- get defensive?

### Interventions:

- Report findings to Interdisciplinary Team.
- Advise patient of concerns.
- Provide external treatment referrals.



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